



Almost Silent

Jason

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Almost Silent packages four original Jason graphic novels, three of them out of print since mid-2008 into one compact, hardcover omnibus collection. (As the title indicates, this volume favors Jason's pantomime works.) You Can't Get There From Here, the longest story of the book (and the only one to be printed in color well, a color), tells the tale of a love triangle involving Frankenstein, Frankenstein's Monster, and The Monster's Bride: Jason cleverly alternates between totally silent sequences involving the three characters and scenes in which Frankenstein's hunchbacked assistant discusses the day's events with a fellow hunchbacked assistant to another mad scientist. (You didn't know they had a union?) Tell Me Something is a brisk (271 panels), near-totally-silent (just a few intertitles) graphic novelette about love lost and found again, told with a tricky mixture of forward- and back-flashing narrative. Meow, Baby is a collection of Jason's short stories and gags, and finally, The Living and the Dead is a hilariously deadpan (and gory) take on the traditional Romero-style zombie thriller. All of these yarns star Jason's patented cast of tight-lipped (or -beaked) bird-, dog-, cat- and wolf-people, and show off his compassion and wry wit. Almost Silent is a perfect starting point for a new reader wanting to know what the fuss is all about, and a handsome, handy, inexpensive collection for the committed Jason fan.

Almost Silent Details

Date : Published December 19th 2017 by Fantagraphics (first published 2010)

ISBN : 9781606993156

Author : Jason

Format : Hardcover 304 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Humor, Fiction, Comix, Graphic Novels Comics

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From Reader Review *Almost Silent* for online ebook

Rick says

This hardcover collects four of Norwegian cartoonist Jason's out-of-print books: *Meow Baby* , *Tell Me Something* , *You Can't Get There From Here* , and *The Living and the Dead* . Similar to Charles Addams and Gahan Wilson, Jason relies on the humorous side of horror in these mostly wordless tales. Perhaps none demonstrates this unique confluence more than the charming and funny *Night of the Living Dead*-inspired *The Living and the Dead*. After all, nothing says true love like giving your betrothed the heart from a freshly-dead woman. Throughout the sublime *Almost Silent*, Jason examines traditional relationships and social norms via a deliciously warped lens, quite probably one constructed by Dr. Frankenstein himself.

Hamish says

Jason is a visual poet.

I think the hardcover omnibuses like this one and *What I Did* are the best way to read him, as his books are usually (especially in terms of reading time) more like short stories and if you read just one you'll think "that was good, but it was over so fast!" But read a bunch in a row and you get the full Jason effect. He deals more in feelings/emotions than in thoughts or ideas, and his stories always leave you with an emotional epiphany or twist. A bunch of those in a row and it's a pretty powerful effect. I don't think he has one book that's a masterpiece, but he's consistently really good.

You could also admire him for his clean, charming art and his amazingly fluid and economic story-telling, but we'll save that for another time.

Steve Moudry says

Almost Silent by Jason collects four of Jason's "quieter" pieces. This volume is full of some of his short strips focused, in the vein of Charles Addams, on horror and monsters. The usual mix of sadness, humor, and intrigue makes this one stand out. I have read *The Living and The Dead* before so it was a nice treat to revisit that one.

Steve says

Brilliant. I'm gradually learning that I really love Jason's work. For a long time the price tag turned me off (80 pages for 15 bucks) but now that they're recollecting his short works in these well-produced but low-priced hardcovers (\$25 for 4 of his shorter works, totaling 300 pages) I'm happy to purchase them. And they're so well-drawn, interesting, emotional, funny... They're just great. Loved the comedic takes on vampires, zombies and mummies found in *Meow Baby*, and equally loved the romantic love story combined with a frightening zombie apocalypse in *The Living and the Dead*. Beautifully packaged, highly intelligent stories with real heart all around.

Arqui Himself says

Este tomo esta compuesto por un lado por tres historias largas:

“*Tell me Something*” un drama amoroso que homenajea al cine mudo; “*You can’t get there from here*” una historia *Frankensteiniana* que tiene la particularidad de ser la única del volumen que además del blanco & negro general agrega tonos de dorado y “*The Living and the Dead*” una de *zombies* también con reminiscencias a los primeros años del cine.

Por otro lado presenta una recopilación de historias cortas con diversos formatos y una variedad de protagonistas: *momias*, *vampiros*, *calaveras*, *hombres lobo*, *Elvis*, *aliens*, donde nunca falta el humor ni el absurdo.

En lo artístico, genial como siempre.

Mycala says

The book starts off with a mummy escaping his sarcophagus and walking outside. A startled bicyclist wrecks his bike when he sees the mummy. The mummy tries to approach various strangers for a quarter so he can call an ambulance for the poor bicyclist. Everyone runs away, terrified.

A skeleton holds his breath underwater for a minute plus.

A zombie can't seem to figure out why people are running from him and attempts various hygienic methods because he just doesn't get it.

That explains why I love this book.

James says

A lovely sample of Jason's work, featuring a collection of his short strips, and three longer stories. Zombies, Frankenstein's monster, thwarted love, murder all laid out in crisp, clean artwork with the storytelling executed neatly with minimal dialogue. An admirable exploration of what the medium has to offer away from the superhero genre, and a great introduction to Jason's work.

Stephen says

This is a collection of four shorter books by Norwegian cartoonist, Jason.

The first book consists of mostly shorter pieces - generally from a few panels to a few pages. These were the weakest in the book I thought. In some ways Jason's style is best suited to short strips, but for some reason the longer pieces seem to work much better.

The second piece in the book is the best in my opinion. It's a hard-boiled love story - featuring Jason's funny animals, obviously. This had the most narrative depth and characterisation. Not vast amounts, but what's there is very effective. Interestingly, similar to Shiga's Empire State Jason uses different page colours to indicate what bits are flashback.

The third is a monster story with a lot of humanity. Essentially a reinterpretation of Frankenstein story archetypes. I liked this one a lot too.

The fourth is a love story with zombies. Quite fun, but a little repetitive.

A good but somewhat uneven book. 3 stars is a little ungenerous - certainly the middle parts were worth more - but better to be pleasantly surprised.

David Schaafsma says

I just reread and reviewed individual volumes collected in this one volume, which I also now have, a little obsessively. As he says, observantly, all four books are either silent or most silent, in that they are almost completely wordless, depending on the images to convert the narratives. Often 3 panel strips, sometimes a single page, sometimes titled longer form stories, sometimes not titles. The longer form titles such as Hey, Wait, Why Are You Doing This, Lost Cat, I killed Adolph Hitler, The Left Bank Gang, I prefer, see as stronger, I guess, evidence of craft development.

The four books are still great, don't get me wrong, as I say in my reviews, all 4 star books:

Meow, Baby

Tell Me Something

You Can't Get There From Here

The Living and the Dead

Kyle Wright says

I'm constantly amazed with what Jason manages to convey with his simply drawn characters and nearly dialog-less strips. His drawings say so much more than what is simply presented to the reader and the depth of emotion is simply startling.

This collection of works covers some of Jason's more supernatural works, with stories that involve Frankenstein, Dracula, zombies, mad scientists, aliens, mummies, cavemen, and walking skeletons, to name a few. While the characters themselves are far removed from reality, the situations they find themselves in, the sadness that permeates their lives, and the dark human-truths they expose are all too real.

While filled with humorous moments, Jason is best when he is exploring the melancholy of existence and the

tragedy of lost love. Very few comic strips ever dare to delve as deeply into the human soul as Jason's do, and those that try rarely succeed as well as he does.

I've read one other of Jason's books (Hey, wait...) and this is the first collection of his that I've read. There are a couple more out there and I look forward to reading the rest of his works. Highly recommended to anyone who likes there comics to have depth and substance.

Ryan says

I might have enjoyed this more if it was the first book I read by Jason. I read Low Moon not long ago and I love it, but this one is more of a mixed bag. The first half of the collection is just filled with the earliest strips. They range between one page and a few panels. The one page strips are fun, but a bit of a letdown when you are expecting some kind of story. They are funny.

There are stories though: "You Can't Get There from Here" and "Tell Me Something" are very interesting, but I couldn't keep track of the different characters. This confusion kind of took away from the stories. If I read them a couple more times, they will probably make more sense.

The standout in the collection is "The Living and the Dead." Story is not confusing at all and I don't think many artists can pull off a love story with a zombie apocalypse as well as Jason has.

Liam says

No author I know right now is as gripping as Jason. I read these all right away in one sitting without feeling pressured. The idea of reading the entire collection of Jason's work in a single day does not sound all that masochistic.

But I don't like Jason's more silent works (I even preferred 'Shh!' to these, which was completely silent!) They rely more heavily on his distinctive fast-paced action scenes, which are brilliant, but that I enjoy most when they lead to the events found in stronger narratives of his, such as in 'Hey Wait' or 'Why Are You Doing This'. What can be seen by reading this is that Jason's dialogue *adds*. Without the narrative, this is passionless action, the comedy or tragedy of it is lost. I wish Jason would use more colour and words in his work, it does it justice.

Matthew Metzdorf says

clever, simple dark humor

Dan says

Almost silent is a graphic novel that contains four Jason's books: Meow, baby, tell me something, you can't get from here and the living and the dead. Unlike many other comic books out there, this book is basically all

black and white except one chapter, even though the pictures and illustrations still look quite good and interesting, it would've been better if more stories and chapters was coloured. Another part where this stands out is the lack of dialogue, dozens of pages often goes without any words, just pictures. This definitely made the book easier to read and shorter, but the book also conveyed the content and the plot quite well without words. I liked the fact that there are a lot of action scenes in this book and the plot is humorous and quite easy to understand. Most of the jokes in this book are dark or slightly inappropriate humour, while most are funny and enjoyable, this is definitely not a comic book for children. One of the letdowns of the book for me is the amount of characters and how they appear in completely different plots, this confused me a lot while I was reading the book, it probably would not have been a problem if I reread the book again, but many of the characters appear too similar and this is definitely one of the areas that would've improved with the addition of colour.

Michael says

Four weird and hilarious genre mashup satires by Jason. This stuff is well drawn silly fun. Definitely check out one of his books if you haven't.
